

Excerpts from the Speech of Pope Urban II, Promulgating the First Crusade, 1095 (Robert the Monk's Version)

At the Council of Clermont, Urban II is reported to have advanced several reasons for the people of Europe, and especially the Franks, to begin a holy war against the Moslems who held Jerusalem. This is a version by Robert the Monk from a work called the *Historia Hierosolymitana*.

Oh, race of Franks, race from across the mountains, race chosen and beloved by God, as shines forth in very many of your works, set apart from all nations by the situation of your country, as well as by your Catholic faith and the honor of the Holy Church! To you our discourse is addressed, and for you our exhortation is intended. We wish you to know what a grievous cause has led us to your country, what peril, threatening you and all the faithful, has brought us.

From the confines of Jerusalem and the city of Constantinople a horrible tale has gone forth and very frequently has been brought to our ears: namely, that a race from the kingdom of the Persians, an accused race, a race utterly alienated from God, a gene ration, forsooth, which has neither directed its heart nor entrusted its spirit to God, has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage, and fire; it has led away a part of the captives into its own country, and a part it has destroyed by cruel tortures; it has either entirely destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of its own religion. They destroy the altars, after having defiled them with their uncleanness. They circumcise the Christians, and the blood of the circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font. When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels, and, dragging forth the end of the intestines, bind it to a stake; then with flogging they lead the victim around until his viscera have gushed forth, and he falls prostrate upon the ground. Others they bind to a post and pierce with arrows. Others they compel to extend their necks, and then, attacking them with naked swords, they attempt to cut through the neck with a single blow. What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? To speak of it is worse than to be silent. The kingdom of the Greeks is now dismembered by them, and deprived of territory so vast in extent that it can not be traversed in a march of two months. On whom, therefore, is the task of avenging those wrongs and of recovering this territory incumbent, if not upon you? You, upon whom above other nations God has conferred remarkable glory in arms, great courage, bodily energy, and the strength to humble the hairy scalp of those who resist you...

What are we saying? Listen and learn! You, girt about with the badge of knighthood, are arrogant with great pride; you rage against your brothers and cut each other in pieces. This is not the (true) soldiery of Christ, which rends asunder the sheep-fold of the Redeemer. The Holy Church has reserved a soldiery for herself to help her people, but you debase her wickedly to her hurt. Let us confess the truth, whose heralds we ought to be; truly, you are not holding to the way which leads to life. You, the oppressors of children, plunderers of widows; you, guilty of homicide, of sacrilege, robbers of another's rights; you who await the pay of thieves for the shedding of Christian blood; as vultures smell fetid corpses, so do you sense battles from afar and rush to them eagerly. Verily, this is the worst way, for it is utterly removed from God! If, forsooth, you wish to be mindful of your souls, either lay down the girdle of such knighthood, or advance boldly, as knights of Christ, and rush as quickly as you can to the defense of the Eastern Church. For she it is from whom the joy of your whole salvation have come forth, who poured into your mouths the milk of divine wisdom, who set before you the holy teachings of the Gospels. We say this, brethren, that you may restrain your murderous hands from the destruction of your brothers, and in behalf of your relatives in the faith oppose yourself to the Gentiles. Under Jesus Christ, our Leader, may you struggle for your Jerusalem... But if it befall you to die this side of it, be sure that to

have died on the way is of equal value, if Christ shall find you in His army. God pays with the same coin, whether at the first or the eleventh hour. You should shudder, brethren, you should shudder at raising a violent hand against Christians; it is less wicked to brandish your sword against Saracens. It is the only warfare that is righteous, for it is charity to risk your life for your brothers.

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The Locker Room Speech?

1. How would you describe the Pope's method of motivating the future warriors in the 1st Paragraph?
2. What three words stand out to you in the 2nd paragraph of the Pope's exhortation?
3. What areas have the Muslims invaded?
4. The last paragraph shifts gears initially. Who is Urban II criticizing?
5. What is the Eastern Church and how is it related to Pope Urban's speech?
6. What's Urban's rationale at the end of the speech?
7. Reviewing the textbook , p. 241, to what degree was Urban's speech consistent with his goals?

8. Based on the Knight's goals, if you were a potential warrior in 1096, how would the speech have resonated for you?

9. What might the new merchants of Europe gain from the fight?

10. Review the consequences of the crusade on p. 244.

a. To what extent was Pope Urbans' goals met?

b. Knights' goals

c. Merchants' goals